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(1605)

Department of State

TELEGRAM

EXCISE

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 /026 W

068408

R 201055Z SEP 71
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0172
INFO USDEL FRANCE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Dawn Sydney DATE 1/26/82
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

S E C R E T SAIGON 15088

EXDIS

SUBJ: MINH'S DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE OF ELECTION RIGGING

REF: A. STATE 166529
B. SAIGON 13461

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ec

1. WE BELIEVE THE DOCUMENT MINH SURFACED TO BE AUTHENTIC DESPITE THE FACT THAT OUR INFORMATION PROVIDES LESS THAN CONCLUSIVE PROOF THAT THIS IS SO. THE NOVAK PIECE (REF A) IS THE FIRST PUBLIC OR PRIVATE STATEMENT WE HAVE SEEN FROM THIEU ON THIS SUBJECT. IT DOES NOT SURPRISE US THAT HE LABELED THE DOCUMENT A FRAUD; HE PROBABLY FELT HE HAD LITTLE CHOICE.

2. WHEN THE AMBASSADOR PRESENTED THIEU A COPY OF THE DOCUMENT, THIEU DID NOT DENY ITS AUTHENTICITY BUT SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ISSUE A STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT WITHIN A DAY OR TWO. THE RESULT WAS THE COMMENT, RELEASED BY THE PRIME MINISTER ON AUG 21, WHICH DOES NOT REPEAT NOT IN SO MANY WORDS SAY THE DOCUMENT IS FALSE AND IN FACT MIGHT BE CONSTRUED AS AN ATTEMPT TO AVOID SUCH DIRECT CHARGE.

3. THE MOST IMPORTANT REASONS WHY WE CONSIDER THE DOCUMENT TO HAVE BEEN AUTHENTIC WERE CONTAINED IN [redacted] WHICH WAS COMPILED IN MID
-AUGUST, AND IN A RECENT CONVERSATION AN EMBASSY OFFICER HAD WITH COLONEL LY BA PHAM, PROVINCE CHIEF OF KHANH HOA. PHAM, ADMITTING THAT HE HAD RECEIVED THE DOCUMENT MADE PUBLIC BY MINH, STRONGLY CRITICIZED THE THIEU ADMINISTRATION FOR

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PUTTING IN WRITING WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN DONE ORALLY. THIS LATTER CONVERSATION WAS RECORDED IN A SEPTEMBER 11 MENCON THE DEPARTMENT HAS PROBABLY RECEIVED BY NOW.
BUNKER

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